



SafeRoutes News

The Safe Routes To Schools Newsletter Spring 2006

SAN ANSELMO CELEBRATES NEW SIDEWALKS

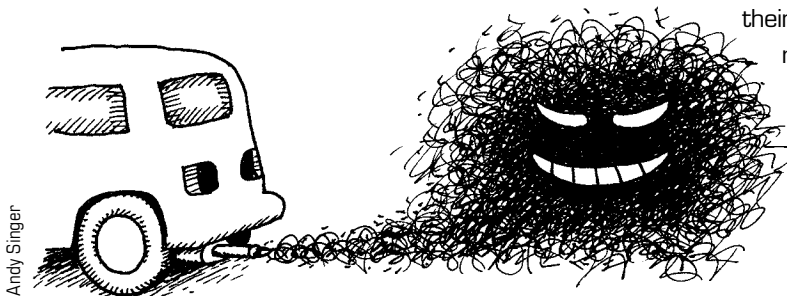


Local dignitaries joined a crowd of children on Monday, November 14, 2005, to celebrate the opening of the new sidewalks on Butterfield Road. The sidewalks will serve children walking to and from Brookside School's lower campus.

"This is an exciting moment for us," said newly elected Ross Valley School District Trustee Gina Feiner, who also has headed up the Safe Routes to Schools team at Brookside School. "These sidewalks will make an enormous difference for the safety of the children."

San Anselmo Councilmember Peter Breen was joined by new councilmembers Ian Roth and Tom Feeman for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Also on hand were Town Administrator Debbie Stutsman, Public Works Director Rabi Elias, Police Chief Chuck Maynard, and Marin County Supervisor Hal Brown. Brookside School was well represented, with the attendance of district trustees Sharon Sagar, Lori Lopin, and Gina Feiner, and Brookside lower school principal David Finnane.

Miller Creek Students Tackle Global Warming



Miller Creek School is engaged in a year-long traffic reduction plan through the efforts of 8th grade science teacher Michael Schulist. With the support of GEMS curriculum, *Global Warming and the Greenhouse Effect*, students participated in labs, experiments and discussions that allowed them to experience science as a tool to increase

their understanding of the environmental and social problems facing their own community. In order to emphasize this connection, Melanie Grubman, Safe Routes to Schools education coordinator, visited during the last class. Melanie helped the students develop positive solutions to reduce CO₂ emissions in their own lives and around the school.

Since this presentation, Melanie and Mr. Schulist have been meeting with a group of students to organize events that educate the larger student and parent body about alternatives for transportation to and from school. (continued on page 5)

Left: Novato Crossing Guard
Right: Hill Middle School students

Safe Routes to Schools

A program of the
Transportation Authority
of Marin

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SafeRoutes News

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*[Children's faces in this
newsletter have been
screened to protect privacy.]*

SUSTAINABLE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS



Transportation Authority of Marin Thinks Long-Term

Marin's nationally recognized Safe Routes to Schools program will be offering more services and long-term planning thanks to 20 years of dedicated funding from the voter-approved Measure A transportation sales tax.

Safe Routes to Schools is putting America's children back on their feet again by increasing the number of children who walk and bike to school. In the last five years, Marin's Safe Routes to Schools program has succeeded in reducing the traffic around schools by encouraging students to walk, bike, carpool, or use transit.

To improve the safety of children walking and bicycling to school, the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) will be providing crossing guards to qualified intersections near schools, and infrastructure funding for safety improvements along the routes to schools. It is developing the first self-funded sustainable Safe Routes to Schools program in the nation.

To attain long-term sustainability, TAM is forming community task forces bringing together school representatives, local officials, and community members, to work collaboratively in creating a common vision for their school travel needs. TAM will assist each task force in developing a comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools Travel Plan that will include engineering improvements, traffic education and enforcement measures, and school-based encouragement activities.

Classroom activities will expand to include middle and high school curriculum. These classes will build on the transportation education currently offered in elementary schools. New contests and events will be developed with greater outreach to more schools and to the community at large.

Crossing Guard Program

The TAM Crossing Guard program will provide trained crossing guards for critical intersections throughout Marin County. Public Works Directors and TAM's Technical Advisory Committee recently evaluated and prioritized existing and requested crossing-guard locations, based upon a survey that was distributed in June 2005. They have recommended that TAM provide funding for crossing guards at 39 locations. Additional locations are now being evaluated for schools that responded to a second request in February.

The program will use trained crossing guards under contract from a professional company that specializes in crossing guard programs. The guards will be deployed starting in the 2006-07 school year.

Safe Pathways to School Projects

Safe Pathways to School is the capital improvement element of TAM's Safe Routes to School program. Where the Safe Routes program identifies circulation improvements needed for safe access to schools, the Safe Pathways program will provide funding for engineering, environmental clearance, and construction of pathway and sidewalk improvements and safety improvements at street crossings.

TAM is currently developing performance criteria to select top qualifying projects. Community participation (parents, school officials, neighborhood, etc.) in the identification of issues and prioritization of needs, along with sound engineering, will be critical for a project to be selected. School access improvements will be eligible for capital funding in late 2006.

For more information on these programs go to www.tam.ca.gov

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS TASK FORCES FOCUS ON SAFETY



Communities Working Together

The Novato Safe Routes to Schools Task Force has been meeting for over three years, gradually growing and adding more schools. Headed up by Councilmembers Pat Eklund and Judy Arnold, the Task Force meets monthly to hammer out issues ranging from speeding traffic to lack of sidewalks along school routes.

Team leaders and other volunteers from participating schools bring their concerns to the group and report on their successful activities. Public Works Director Glenn Young has been assisting in evaluating the technical issues, while officer Rich Hill from the Novato Police Department provides increased enforcement. Many of the schools have incorporated Safe Routes to Schools into their PTA committee structure, while holding regular Walk and Roll to School Days and taking part in the TAM SR2S sponsored contests.

With the help of Safe Routes to Schools engineer David Parisi, the Task Force has conducted Walkabouts at four of its participating schools, developed school area signing and striping plans for seven schools, and submitted a capital grant application for improvements to several schools. They are now turning their attention to traffic safety education, and will be developing a comprehensive campaign to improve driver behavior in Novato—especially as it relates to the school commute.

New Task Forces Forming

The Mill Valley and Ross Valley School Districts are no strangers to Safe Routes to Schools. Each was a pioneer participant in the initial pilot Safe Routes

to Schools program from 2000 to 2002, and their local schools continue their activities. TAM has resurrected both the Mill Valley and the Ross Valley Task Forces in order to assist them in developing comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools Travel Plans for each community. Elected officials Peter Breen of San Anselmo, Lew Tremaine of Fairfax, Ross Valley School District Trustee Gina Feiner, and Marin County Supervisor Hal Brown are assisting in establishing the task force for Ross Valley. Marin County Supervisor Charles McGlashan, Mill Valley School District Trustee Paula Reynolds and Councilmember Shawn Marshall are the elected representatives assisting with the Mill Valley Task Force. Both task forces are initially focusing on engineering issues.

To find out more about forming a Safe Routes to Schools Task Force for your community, contact Wendi Kallins, wendi@marinbike.org.



Mill Valley Task Force

To find out more about forming a Safe Routes to Schools Task Force in your community, contact Wendi at Wendi@marinbike.org

Novato Task Force at its monthly meeting

PROJECT EARTH DAY – DON'T MISS OUT!

Six weeks of environmental education, action and community service in the classroom and beyond.

The incidence of extreme weather events has gone up 28% since 1975 and it is now confirmed that the Arctic ice caps are melting, threatening coastal regions with flooding and actually drowning some small islets. (U.S. E.P.A.)

What can you do to reduce global warming?

Safe Routes to Schools will be offering students opportunities to show that one person can make a difference. Teaming up with Marin Conservation Corps and Next Generation, Safe Routes to Schools will be providing special Earth Day classes and activities to schools throughout Marin.

- To schedule Safe Routes classes contact Melanie at Melanie@marinbike.org or call 456-3469 ext 5#.
- To view the entire county-wide Earth Day activity guide, go to www.marinearthday.org

ASSEMBLIES:

Middle and High School

Middle and high school students can sign up for a special guest speaker assembly that features Drake graduate and National Collegiate Cycling Champ Stefanie Graeter. Graeter will be speaking about how she, a relatively un-athletic Drake student, started her training by biking to school and went on to become a champion cyclist.

Elementary Schools

Elementary schools can invite Yikes, a colorful "superhero," along with a trick rider to their school to entertain and talk about the four fantastic reasons to bike to school. In a second assembly, Yikes offers a humorous helmet fashion show to demonstrate the right and the wrong way to wear a helmet.



Yikes

THINK TWICE:

HOW DO YOU GET AROUND?

High Schools

High School students can be treated to the engaging Powerpoint presentation "Think Twice," which encourages youth to consider the full costs of automobile dependency in the United States, while offering them ways to make changes in their own transportation choices.

Middle School

For 5th and 6th grades, we offer "Greenhouse in a Bottle," a hands-on science demonstration that simulates the earth's environment before and after the greenhouse effect.

Elementary School

For the younger children, we gather students 'round to hear a fable with an environmental message. "Family Mouse Behind the Wheel" tells the story of how the animals of the forest abandon their automobiles in favor of preserving their forest home in its natural state.

BIKE COMMUTER CHALLENGE

Form a team with five others to track your carbon-free commuter miles. Students and parents can join with the rest of the Bay Area in the Bay Area Bicycle Coalition's Commuter Challenge. Prizes available to teams that accumulate the most human-powered miles during the month of May. For more information go to www.bayareabikes.org/btwd/tbc.html



Human Powered Parade, Fairfax, October 8, 2005



RIDE N' SEEK, A ROLLING TREASURE HUNT

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22, 2006 from 9 am to 3 pm by participating in habitat restoration, and then exploring the beautiful creek-side bike path at Samuel P. Taylor State Park.

Marin Conservation Corps will plan four separate habitat restoration and trail projects in the Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Volunteers will work on the projects all morning. Lunch will be provided, with an awards ceremony and raffle after lunch.

Stay for the afternoon and ride through the park for the third annual Ride n' Seek Rolling Treasure Hunt for families. Fun and fabulous prizes, including kayak rentals and more, await those who search for clues along this idyllic bike path through the redwoods.

Miller Creek Students Tackle Global Warming

[Continued from front page]



Using information collected by Mr. Schulist's class through parent and student surveys, students have begun planning for their springtime two-month self-named "Miller Creek's Super Duper Walking Biking Challenge Extravaganza." Using punch cards, students will track their carbon-reducing trips by driving less and walking and biking more.

For more information about traffic reduction activities at Miller Creek, please e-mail Michael Schulist, schulist@marin.k12.ca.us.



INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL DAY 2005

Children and parents from 33 Marin County schools joined millions of others around the world to leave their cars at home and take to the streets on October 5, 2005.

"We had an awesome turn-out," said Caroline Perron, Team Leader from Lu Sutton School in Novato. "There was a steady flow of kids and adults arriving at school. The bike racks were filling up, and you could not have asked for a better morning in regards to the weather. It was just beautiful, and everyone was in a great mood. It was a great way to kick off the monthly walk/bike to school and to start the day."



Dixie School Walk to School Day (top), Supervisor Susan Adams walks to school (bottom)

"We estimate between the two walks, we had about 80 to 90 kids plus parents participating. Parents on traffic loop duty that morning reported a significant reduction in the vehicle activity before school! Thanks to everybody involved!"

—Team Leaders Kel Harris and Dawn Connolly, Team Leaders for Dixie School, San Rafael

A survey conducted by the British Department of Transportation found that 9 in 10 teachers report that their students who walk to school arrive more alert for the day ahead:

- **87% of teachers questioned believed that walking to school gives children a chance to wake up fully before they reach the classroom.**
- **80% felt that children who walked to school "settled down" once in the classroom.**
- **93% felt that walking to school made children more aware of road safety issues.**

HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS DRIVE THEIR BIKES

SAFE ROUTES QUIZ

Why are some crosswalks yellow?

Yellow crosswalks are used in California to denote crosswalks contiguous to a school building or school grounds.



During the last two weeks of October 2005, 165 sixth graders from Hill Middle School in Novato took part in a bicycle education program during their physical education class. The activity was designed to teach them how to "drive" their bicycles. The program was provided to increase student safety while promoting biking and walking to school.

Teaching students how to drive prepares them to fully understand what happens on the road.

Lessons on helmet safety, hand signals, bike handling skills, pedestrian safety, lane position and right of way were all included. The program culminated with two neighborhood bike rides of three miles each. During the adult-supervised rides students used their recent training to safely navigate the toughest intersections near the school.

Environmental Fact:

Driving is the biggest contributor to increased greenhouse gases.

REDWOOD STUDENTS PROMOTE CARPOOLING

A small group of students from the integrative ecology course at Redwood High School have decided to tackle traffic congestion at their school. Working with Melanie Grubman, Safe Routes to Schools Education Coordinator, they are designing a school-specific strategy for their school modeled after a successful program conducted at Gunn High School in Palo Alto. Gunn High School was able to initiate a traffic plan that reduced solo drivers from 250 to only 85 over two years. The Redwood High School students will test-pilot the lessons learned at Gunn.

Please contact Melanie at Melanie@marinbike.org, 456-3469 ext. 5# if you are interested in meeting about this project-tested strategy to reduce unhealthy driving habits in and around high schools.



Walking one mile in 20 minutes burns the same calories as:

- Running a mile in 10 minutes
- Swimming breast stroke for 10 minutes
- Playing football for 12 minutes
- Cycling for 16 minutes
- Doing aerobics for 16 minutes
- Weight training for 17 minutes

TOUR OF CALIFORNIA COMES TO SAUSALITO



Two cyclists competing in the Tour of California joined with Safe Routes to Schools to provide an entertaining and informative assembly for the students of Sausalito Marin City School District. A bicycle rodeo was also provided. Pictured: Adam Politzer (City of Sausalito), Gustavo Artacho and Sebastian Alexandre (Team Colavita Cycling), Ruby Sullivan-Wilson (Principal- Bayside Elementary School), Michael McCarthy (Cyclist and Staff writer – Pacific Sun), School Board Member Robert Fisher, Jason Agar (Safe Routes to Schools), School Board Member Dr. Shirley Thornton, Melanie Grubman (Safe Routes to Schools AKA YIKES!), Mary Buttler (Interim School Sausalito School District Superintendent).

FAIRFAX AWARDED \$132,200 TO PROVIDE KEY SCHOOL CROSSWALK AND WARNING LIGHTS

The Town of Fairfax was recently awarded \$132,200 by Caltrans to install a high-visibility crosswalk, safety lighting, warning signs and pavement markings across the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Marin Road-Oak Tree Lane. The grant funds come from the Caltrans' Hazard Elimination Safety Program.

The need for this improvement was identified by the Fairfax Safe Routes to School committee as part of the longer-term vision of providing sidewalks along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, installing a pedestrian bridge adjacent to the Marin Road auto bridge, and implementing traffic calming methods at the intersection to slow vehicular speeds and reduce pedestrian crossing distances.



The sidewalk and bridge projects, currently under design, were previously awarded funding through Caltrans' Safe Routes to School program.

The grant application was prepared by Bill Whitney, the Town's previous Public Works Director, and David Parisi, TAM's SR2S engineer. Debra Sue Johnson, the Town's new Public Works Director, will oversee design and construction. The Town will be responsible for providing \$14,800 in matching funds.

SLOW DOWN!

The distance it takes to stop a car depends on how fast it is travelling:

40 mph.....400'

30 mph.....200'

20 mph.....100'

Please drive slow in school areas!

At lower speeds, drivers are more aware of their surroundings and have time to react to other road users.

CALENDAR

APRIL AND MAY

Frequent Rider Miles
contest

APRIL

Earth Day classes
available

Saturday April 22

Earth Day celebration
in Samuel P. Taylor
Park 9 am to 3 pm

Habitat Restoration
with Marin

Conservation Corps

Lunch and live music

Ride n' Seek, Rolling
Treasure Hunt

MAY

Bike Commute Month:
Enroll in the Team
Bike Challenge [www.bayareabikes.org/
btwd/tbc.html](http://www.bayareabikes.org/btwd/tbc.html)

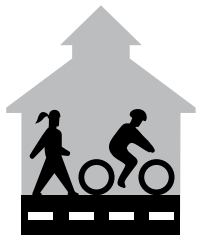
Frequent Rider Miles Play and Win!



FREQUENT RIDER MILES 2006

Twenty-five Marin schools will be participating in our sixth annual Frequent Rider Miles contest sponsored by Trek bicycles. Students will receive cards in order to track the number of times they walk, bike, carpool, or take the bus to or from school. For every 20 points earned they will receive a reward and be entered into a raffle to win a new Trek bicycle and other valuable prizes. Each participating school will receive a set of prizes.

Measure A, Marin's half-cent transportation sales tax, provides funding for Safe Routes to School programs in all Marin schools. If your school is not currently participating, please see the TAM web site, www.tam.ca.gov, or contact wendi@marinbike.org to learn how you can join the program.



**SAFE ROUTES
TO SCHOOLS**
MARIN COUNTY

A program of the Transportation Authority of Marin

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